



## Senate Judiciary Committee Approves Additional Judgeship for Ninth Circuit

March 2, 2007

**Washington, DC** –The Senate Judiciary Committee has approved an amendment to the Court Security bill that would add a new judgeship to the Ninth Circuit, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today announced.

Senator Feinstein co-sponsored the amendment to the Court Security bill, which was filed by Senator Jon Kyl (R-Arz.). The amendment seeks to transfer a judgeship from the District of Columbia Circuit to the Ninth Circuit.

**“It just makes sense to take a judgeship from where it is needed least, and put it where it is needed most,”** Senator Feinstein said. **“California needs more judges. Transferring a judgeship from the D.C. Circuit to the Ninth Circuit for California would be the first step toward making this happen.”**

The amendment was approved yesterday by the Judiciary Committee, and the Court Security bill now goes to the full Senate for a vote.

### **Background**

The amendment offered by Senator Kyl would transfer a judgeship from the District of Columbia Circuit to the Ninth Circuit.

According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, there were 107 appeals filed per judge in the D.C. Circuit in 2006, and 523 filings per judge in the Ninth Circuit. Those numbers break down to approximately five times more filings per judge in the Ninth Circuit than in the D.C. Circuit. The national average in 2006 was 399 filings per judge, placing the D.C. Circuit far below the average and the Ninth Circuit well above the average.

In addition, there were 1,853 pending appeals in the Ninth Circuit – the highest number of any circuit in the nation. And there were 387 pending appeals in the D.C. Circuit – the lowest number out of all twelve circuits.

California is hit hardest by the inadequate number of judgeships on the Ninth Circuit. In 2005, 10,000 federal appeals, or 70 percent of the circuit’s total docket, were filed in California.

Yet only 50 percent of the Ninth Circuit's judgeships – 14 out of 28 judges – are assigned to California.

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